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Study of Paganini's Twenty-four
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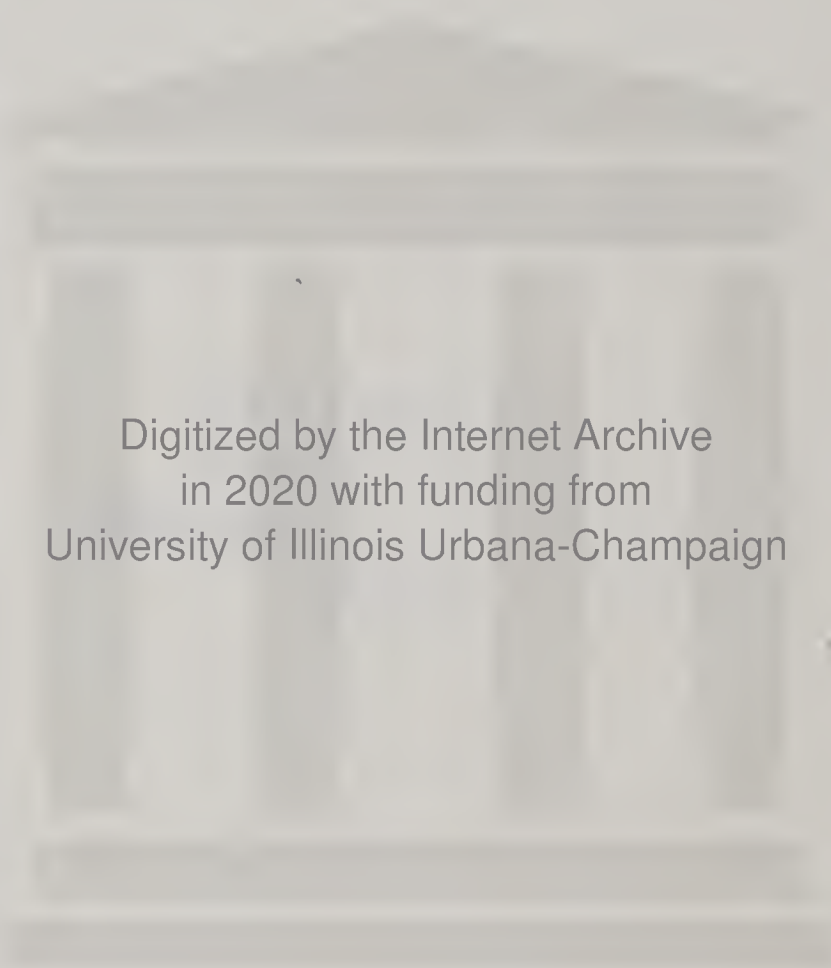
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The Study of Paganini's Twenty-four Caprices

A New Descriptive Treatise based upon Paganini's
Secret Methods, explaining how these famous
studies can be mastered by all Violin Players.

Especially designed for players with small hands

By **EMIL KROSS.**

Illustrated with numerous Photographic Poses of
the Author, and especially translated from the
original German Edition by

GUSTAV SAENGER.

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Preface and Explanatory Remarks.



PRECISELY like their talented creator, *Nicolo Paganini's* volume of 24 *Caprices* is absolutely representative of a distinctive and individual class in the art of violin playing. Musically considered, they are conceived in such original and fascinating fashion and are possessed of such demoniacal fire and passion as to fairly electrify every sympathetic listener. However, while their musical worth, alone, entitles them to be classed as master-pieces of composition, their value is considerably heightened in view of their remarkable technical difficulties. In this particular they surpass everything which the exercising literature of the violin can boast of, and they may justly and fittingly be termed the non-plus-ultra of all similar works. Paganini's *Caprices* can only be completely mastered by violinists possessed of unusual and extraordinary technical ability. This is one of the principal reasons why they are resignedly abandoned as invincible by all violin players with natural drawbacks, such as a faulty hand formation, with short fingers capable of only average stretching possibilities.

IV.

However, in order to bring these beautiful, highly important and necessary studies also within reach of other than specially gifted violinists, I was prompted to revise and edit them in a most thorough and practical manner, as would best be fitted and adapted for this special purpose. There can be little doubt that the careful and painstaking indications as to fingering, positions, bowing, marks of expression and interpretation and special explanatory hints with which I have provided my revision have been the means of saving infinite time and exertion for the student. With these indications he will be guided correctly in practising them. Let him but understand the correct application of these indications in the practical and artistic sense in which they are offered, and he cannot fail in ultimately reaching the desired goal; naturally this one sooner, that one later, in accordance with each student's individual gifts, enthusiasm, diligence and endurance.

Furthermore, in my edition of these Caprices, I have changed their numerical order from that of the original edition, my purpose having been to let them follow each other more in progressive order as regards technical difficulties. Furthermore, I have included Paganini's *Perpetuum Mobile*, as well as his *Duo for One Violin*. The former is a most effective solo number admirably suited for public performance, as well as being an exceptionally fine study for

the right arm, demanding not only endurance and dexterity of, but also imparting these necessary qualities to the latter. Owing to its original peculiarity the Duo is also most excellently suited for public performance. The ingenious pizzicato passages which form the accompaniment, impart the greatest skill and dexterity to the left hand.

Above all, I anxiously endeavored to impart the necessary courage to many students, to enter into the study of these exceedingly difficult Caprices (the execution of which, in former days, was considered as nothing short of witchcraft), with the proper spirit; and at the same time indicate such means and methods as would enable them to pursue their study with ultimate real success.

It has been repeatedly proven that after only a few preliminary trials the majority will lose confidence; and, arguing that these Caprices are so difficult as to make them absolutely unplayable, abandon them entirely.—Investigation as to the causes of such lack of courage and confidence on the part of even more than ordinarily gifted musical aspirants, has produced two very weighty and important reasons. As applied to many violinists, the first of these may be found in the unfavorable build of the hand, which, according to rule and in the customarily accepted position of the hand and the instrument, will not admit of extraordinarily wide

stretches, such as occur most frequently in Paganini's Caprices.—The second reason, however, may be accounted for in the insufficient preparatory training of the average violin player. That is to say, the greater number of violinists have not studied the technical requirements, such as Scale studies, Position studies, Chord studies, Double stop studies, thoroughly, practically or carefully enough. Furthermore, they may have studied the exercising works of Mazas, Kreutzer, Fiorillo, Rode, Gavinies, with more or less competent teachers or from faulty editions.—Complete and perfect mastery of the above-mentioned works, however, is absolutely necessary before the slightest hope can be entertained of mastering all of Paganini's Caprices. Naturally there are many instances of very gifted violinistic talents, for whom it will suffice if the teacher will select the most necessary and important studies from the above-mentioned works, in order to hasten their progress. But these cases are few and far between.

To begin with, I shall direct my attention towards the principal hindrance, which with so many players is caused by a little hand and inadequate stretching possibilities, and how this may be remedied by a better, a more suitable and a more practical—if somewhat more difficult—position of the hand and arm.

Correct Position of the Hand and Arm.*



UNDOUBTEDLY the position used by Paganini himself is the one to be considered and adopted. Paganini's position of the arm and hand was a totally different one from Louis Spohr's, or that of all the master violinists of the classic period. In considering this difference of position, entirely peculiar to Paganini, many points in his phenomenal performance will admit of explanation. I will begin by reviewing the generally adopted position of the body and violin, in order to allow of comparison with that as employed by Paganini. The rules for the usual and accepted position of the body and violin were as follows: The violinist must stand in such a manner that the principal weight of the body will rest upon the left foot. The right foot placed lightly, somewhat away from the left one, in a slanting outward position. The body must not be carried carelessly, but in a

*This treatise should be read and studied while holding the violin and bow. Repeated and careful trials should be made to execute the different positions of the hand and arm with the aid of a large mirror. This must be repeated daily. It is positively necessary to employ oneself daily with these explanatory remarks, rules and hints, in order to become thoroughly familiar with them.

strictly upright position. The breast should be entirely unobstructed, so as to allow free breathing. (*See illustrations I. and II.*) Through means of such a position quiet repose and security of the left side of the body is obtained. At the same time free and unobstructed bowing is furthered on the right side (*See illustration I.*) The violin is placed under the chin and against the left collarbone.



Note correct Position, Ease and Comfort obtained by the use of the Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest.

As a rule, a chin rest is fastened upon the lower left side of the violin, the old and impracticable appliances of former times having

given way to the admirable Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest, which enables a player to hold the violin in a correct and horizontal position, through a light pressure of the chin upon the plate of the chin rest, and consequently, without any aid of the left hand. In this way the greatest freedom is given to the left hand, allowing it to proceed into the highest positions without any additional exertion for the support of the violin. With the aid of this Chin and Shoulder Rest the positions can be readily exchanged, without disturbing or changing the position of the violin, which in turn will affect the purity of intonation most favorably. Another advantage of this Chin and Shoulder Rest consists in its being fastened at the extreme edge of the ribs, and that it comes in contact with neither the top or back of the instrument; in consequence, the breadth and volume of tone is not diminished through pressure of the chin. This is still another proof of its superiority above other chin rests; in short, the Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest may be declared as a most important invention for the aid of modern virtuosity. (*See illustration II.*)

In accordance with the old and well-known rules of Louis Spohr and other celebrated classic masters the violin—



Illustration No. I.

Correct manner of holding the Violin through the aid of a
Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest.

(1) Should be held in such a manner that the strings, from the bridge to the saddle, will appear in a perfectly level or horizontal direction. (*See illustration I., III., IV.*)

(2) Should not be held exactly straight, but so far to the left that the scroll will come nearly opposite the left shoulder (*See illustration V.*)

(3) Should point towards the right to such an extent that the bow can cross the strings easily to its tip at right angles. This inclination toward the right probably amounts to an angle of 45 degrees (just between a perpendicular and a horizontal position). (*See illustration I., II., III., IV., V.*)

(4) With this position of the violin and in bowing upon the E string, the right elbow presses against the body (*See illustration I. and III.*)

(5) According to the old-established rules, the neck of the violin should be held by the lower first joint of the forefinger and the second joint of the thumb, in such fashion as to allow the tip of the first finger to extend above the neck of the violin. In consequence, the thumb ought to be placed against the side of the neck, opposite to the second finger, when the latter stops B flat upon the G string. The space between forefinger and thumb must be maintained and the hand proper must not touch the neck, the hand being held in such a hollow manner as to permit the tip of the bow being placed through the opening of the two loosely applied finger-joints. The hand is not to be spread flatly, but the ball of the thumb is to protrude, giving an appearance



Illustration No. II.

Holding the Violin in a horizontal position with the aid of the Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest through light pressure of the chin.

as though the hand were partly formed into a fist. (*See illustrations VI., VIII., X., XII.*)

The wrist and outside of the hand are to ap-

pear as though in a straight line as much as possible. (*See illustrations VI., VIII., X., XII.*)

(6) The fingers are to be bent in both joints, held lightly above the strings, and are to fall upon them like hammers. (*See illustrations VI., VIII., etc.*)

(7) The arm is to be held exactly before the breast and as near as possible beneath the centre of the violin; however, to facilitate the correct placing of the fingers on the lower strings in the higher positions (starting with the fourth), it (the arm) should be moved still nearer toward the right side. (*See illustration V.*)



Illustration No. III.

Correct position of the hand and arm as seen from the right side.



Illustration No. IV.

Correct position of the hand and arm as seen from the left side.

The neck rests upon the second joint of the thumb. The tip of the latter does not point in an upward direction, but toward the peg-box. The point of the elbow must come under the right rib of the instrument, contrary to the teachings of the old school, of having it directly beneath the centre of the back.

Another advantage brought about through the use of the Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest, is that it enables entire looseness of the elbow joint, as well as a firm and quiet position of the wrist. A constant strain in the neighborhood of the left shoulder was one of the many drawbacks brought about by holding the violin in such a position that the scroll came directly in a straight line with the shoulder. In doing away

with this drawback the use of this admirable Chin and Shoulder Rest also enables a freer and less restrained movement and action of the fingers. The ball of the thumb should come in contact with the cornered projection of the neck while in the Third Position (*see Illustration XII.*) However, this position of the thumb and forefinger was only intended for the first three positions. Louis Spohr refers to the position of the hand in the Fourth Position as follows, in his violin school: "In the following Fourth Position the left hand must be raised a trifle above the edge of the top, in order that the fingers may reach the G string with ease and fall upon the fingerboard straight from above." (*See Il-*



Illustration V.

Correct position of the arm and hand as seen from the front. The first joint of the first finger does not touch the neck, but is placed at a distance from it. The elbow is not placed directly under the middle of the back, but below the right rib of the violin.

lustration XIV.) This raising of the hand is continued more and more with every succeeding higher position. Gradually the thumb leaves its original position and is drawn more and more around the lower projection of the neck, while the elbow is constantly drawn more below the centre of the instrument (*see illustration XV.*)



Illustration VI.

Correct position of the hand in the half-position, as handed down from the classic players. (The fingers stopping A flat, B flat, C and D flat, on the G String.)

Now, in order to prove that the above is not the most desirable, surest, nor the most practical position of the hand and arm for attaining and mastering the highest possible virtuosity, I will proceed to the discussion of the positions as employed by Paganini. To begin with, these



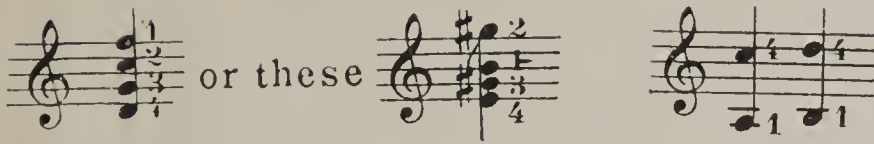
Illustration No. VII.

Correct position of the hand in the half-position, according to the author's modern principles and requirements. The neck rests upon the second joint of the thumb. The tip of the latter does not point in an upward direction, but toward the peg-box. (The fingers are stopping A flat, B flat, C flat and D flat).

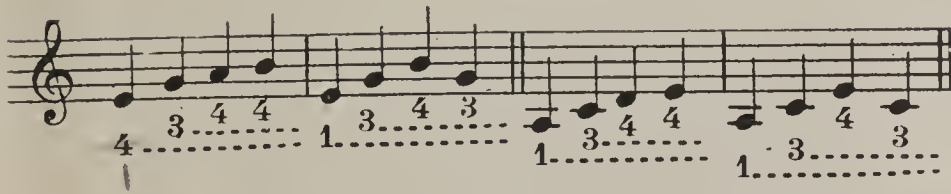
consist in the following: "The hand is placed in a more right-angled position; this is brought about by drawing the hand itself more to the left, which, in turn, will bring that part of the hand which holds the ball of the little finger nearer to the finger-board. The second joint of the thumb, however, should be withdrawn from

the side of the neck; it should be placed rather below the latter, say where the curve of the neck toward the peg-box begins. (*See Illustrations VII., IX., XI., XIII., XIV., XV.*) Therefore, the tip of this joint will not point in a straight upward position—as in the old and well-known method—but, to the contrary, toward the peg-box. The first joint of the forefinger should not lean against the neck, but should be held at a distance therefrom. (*See Illustrations IV., V.*) Furthermore, attention must be paid, that instead of holding the elbow exactly beneath the middle of the instrument's back, it should be pushed a great deal more toward the right side. This method of holding the elbow should be maintained not only in the higher positions, but also from the very first one on. (*See Illustration V.*) For the rest the rules of the old method for the holding of the arm and hand hold good. Consequently, with the new method, the violin is held in just the same horizontal position as of old; the peg-box comes directly opposite to the left shoulder, and the inclination of the violin toward the right side should amount to an angle of something like 45 degrees." (*See Illustrations I., II., III., IV., V.*)

When once a player has become accustomed to them, the advantages of these new positions are enormous. For instance, in attempting to place the fingers simultaneously upon the following combination of notes:



or even for simple stretches of the fourth finger upon the lower two strings as below :



we will notice that with undeveloped hands of children or with short-fingered hands of adults, the thumb will, as already mentioned, withdraw from the side of the neck of its own accord, and the second thumb-joint will place itself somewhat beneath the neck. (*See Illustration V.*) This position of the hand, with which the elbow is moved much more toward the right—nearly beneath the rim of the right rib (*see Illustration V.*) must now be accepted and considered as the normal position. With it the fourth finger will be enabled to stretch the above intervals with much greater surety and ease. This holds good in simple successions of intervals, as well as for double, triple and quadruple stops. It must be understood that the functions of the thumb consist principally in exercising a balancing pressure against the downward action, or stopping of the fingers. This it cannot accomplish satisfactorily, when held at the side

of the neck. The neck must rest upon the second joint of the thumb. In this position the fingers, including the naturally weaker third and fourth, can fall upon the fingerboard firmer and stronger than with the old position. (*See Illustrations VII., IX., XI., XIII., XIV., XV.*)



Illustration No. VIII.

Correct position of the hand in the first position, as handed down from the classic players. (The fingers stopping "A, B, C and D" on the "G" String).

This new position of the hand is a quiet and well regulated one, and through its aid difficult double, triple, and quadruple stops can be executed without constantly moving, shifting or turning the hand itself. With the old position of the hand the fingers of beginners must be stretched considerably, while playing upon the lower strings, as the connecting muscles of the

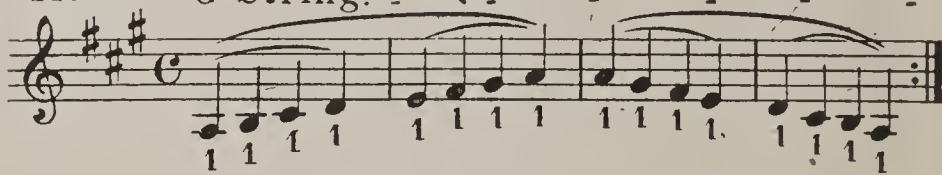
fingers as a rule only become pliable and flexible after years of practice. With the position of the hand at right angles, however, the fingers, placed correctly in both joints, will be enabled to master all the strings in every particular.

Another point in favor of this new position is that for double stops, which demand greater stretches, the crooked and jumbled placing of the fingers—particularly of the third and fourth—will be avoided. With the old position of the hand this improper placing of the fingers very often causes the strings to be pushed out of place, toward the left (not so frequently toward the right) with faulty intonation as a natural consequence. The well-known rule of the old method, which reads that for the third position, the thumb-ball of the left hand must rest against the cornered projection of the neck, is entirely done away with, when employing the new and right-angled position of the hand. Just as in the first, second, fourth and higher positions, the position of the hand must be a right-angled one in the third position, and not a slanting one as in the old position of the hand. (*See Illus. VII., IX., XI., XIII., XIV., XV.*) Commencing with the fourth position, however, the lower part of the hand comes in contact with the right rib of the instrument. With every succeeding higher position, the tip of the thumb is drawn below the neck more and more. Furthermore, the lower part of the hand is

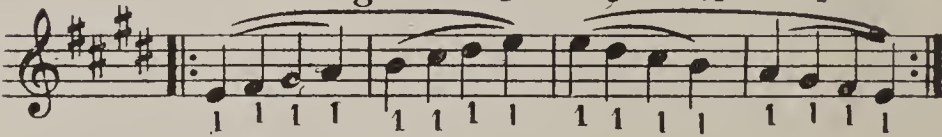
constantly raised toward the rib with the continued use of the higher positions.

In fact, with the highest intervals upon the D and G strings, the hand is even raised above the top of the instrument, leaving the rib entirely. This can be proven most easily by playing ascending octaves, or diatonic or chromatic scales with one finger upon one string, as in this way a change of position occurs upon every interval:

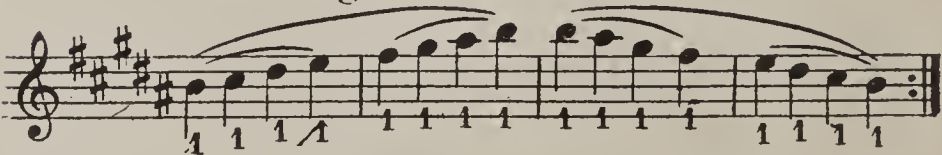
a) detached b) first four then eight notes in a slur. G String. - - - - -



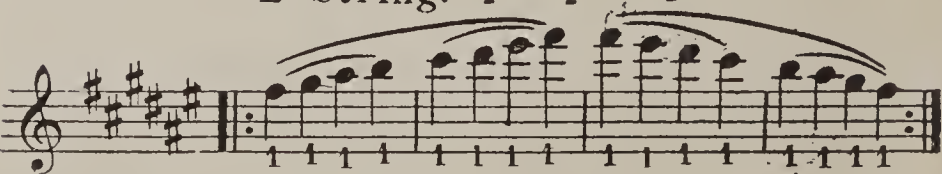
D String. - - - - -



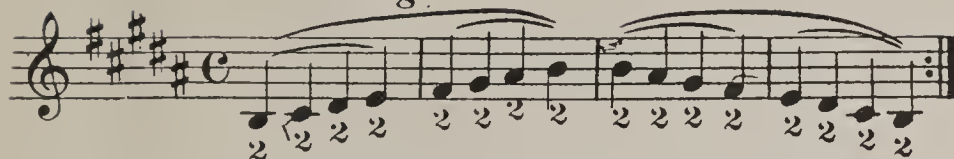
A String. - - - - -



E String. - - - - -

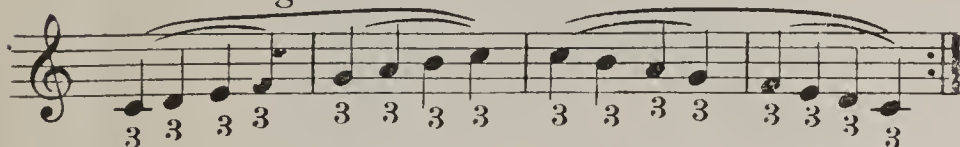


G String.



In similar manner upon the other three strings

G String.

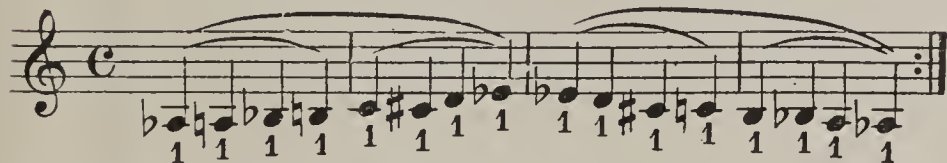


In similar manner upon the other three strings.

G String.



In similar manner upon the other three strings.



In similar manner upon the other three strings.



In similar manner upon the other three strings.



In similar manner upon the other three strings.

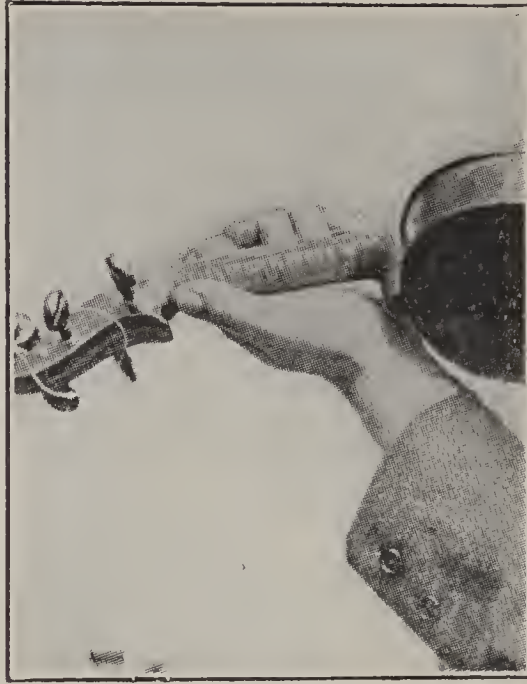


Illustration No. IX.

Correct position of the hand in the first position, according to the author's modern principles and requirements. The tip of the thumb pointing toward the peg-box. (The fingers stopping "E, F sharp, G and A," on the "D" String).

It now remains to be proven if this position of the hand and arm was, or was not, made use of by Paganini. And then, how and in which manner a beginner as well as an advanced and competent violinist who has played in the customary old-established position, can, in time, accustom himself to this much better and more advantageous hand and arm position. That a sudden change to the latter is not possible at once, or even in a few weeks, will be easily un-

derstood by everyone. In reference to the first question, the following is offered as reliable customary position of the violin, we have been taught that the left arm should remain in its natural position, in such a way that the elbow comes to be placed under the middle of the instrument, in a vertical position; this, of course,



Illustration No. X.

Correct position of the hand in the second position, as handed down from the classic players. (The fingers stopping "F, G, A and B flat," on the "D" String).

will always remain the most natural position. Paganini's position, however, is more strained, in so far that, with in-bent upper arm, he presses the tip of the elbow closely against the body." From this short statement of Guhr's alone, who, it is claimed, was an excellent violinist himself, the proof is given that Paganini's hand position was a more right-angled one,

brought about by the forced position of the elbow toward the right, or vice versa—the more proof: Sketches made of Paganini in various cities while playing, bear out the most satisfactory evidence that he did play in this manner. In these sketches the pressed position of the elbow toward the right, as well as the resting of the neck of the instrument upon the second joint of the thumb, can be observed most surprisingly. Furthermore, it is proven by the remarks of a famous Paganini enthusiast, Carl Guhr, in his time kapellmeister at the Stadttheater in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, who enjoyed the opportunity of watching Paganini's performances both in public and private for a long time. In his special work on "Paganini's Art of Playing the Violin," he discusses Paganini's position as follows: "In accordance with the right angled hand-position of Paganini led him to the above-described position of the elbow. The great advantage of placing the fingers of the left hand upon the fingerboard by pressing the elbow more toward the right, has already been alluded to. However, that it should be pressed against the body as Paganini did, has become entirely unnecessary since the invention of the Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest.

It is more than plausible and a positive certainty that for many years Paganini himself had played with the customary arm and hand position. It is known who his teachers were; and

as it is also known that they played and taught in strict accordance with the teachings of the old school, it is clear that under no circumstances would they have allowed any emancipation on his part in this particular, at such an early date. Undoubtedly Paganini was prompted to adopt this new position, which differed so enormously from the teachings of his instructors, during the evolutions of his own original



Illustration No. XI.

Correct position of the hand in the second position, according to the author's modern principles and requirements. The tip of the thumb pointing toward the peg-box. (The fingers stopping "F, G, A and B flat" on the "D" String).

school of playing, which, as evidenced in his Caprices and Concertos, constantly favored the highest positions (or in connection with these). It is also plausible that he gradually made the change through observation of the mode of play-

ing the 'Cello, in which as we all know, the neck is placed "upon" the thumb. In all probability this change of position occurred during his three-year engagement as *chef d'orchestra* at the court of Lucca. According to his own suitable remark at the time, that "one day taught the next," it is said that during this engagement he arrived at the perfection of his remarkable proficiency upon the G string, and other striking inventions.



Illustration No. XII.

Correct position of the hand in the third position, as handed down from the classic players. (The fingers stopping "C, D, E and F" on the "G" String). The ball of the thumb touches the cornered extension of the neck.

Consolation may be found in the above for all violinists who might imagine that with the adoption of this new position their studies, so to say,

would have to begin all over again. Under no condition would it be necessary to interrupt their daily occupation (say as orchestral violinist) for any length of time. Naturally it would prove of great advantage if those, whose circumstances might allow of it, would direct their entire study, attention and efforts toward the mastery of the above-described purpose; they certainly would succeed much quicker. It is more than necessary, however, that any one who has played for years in the customary position should not imagine that he will be able to adopt and feel perfectly at ease in the new position all of a sudden. Several weeks are necessary under most favorable circumstances, until the hand and elbow have become accustomed to it to such an extent as to make it appear second nature. In most cases, however, months will be necessary before a player has arrived at successful mastery. Mention of this is made in order that those who try the change may not be discouraged after a few unsuccessful attempts.

As additional proof relative to Paganini's position, I would like to mention his pupil Camille Sivori and Ole Bull, both of whom I had opportunities to hear and observe. In 1876 an opportunity presented itself for me to hear Camille Sivori (Paganini's only pupil, and one whom he had taught from earliest childhood and developed into a full-fledged virtuoso) play in

private in Dresden. Hearing him thus, and the chances of playing duets with him, enabled me to watch him carefully and note the peculiarities of his style and playing. *His position of the arm was exactly as described in Guhr's book, mentioned above, and his position of the hand was*



Illustration No. XIII.

Correct position of the hand in the third position, according to the author's modern principles and requirements. Again the neck rests upon the second joint of the thumb. (The fingers stopping "C, D, E and F" on the "G" String). The ball of the thumb does not touch the cornered extension of the neck.

exactly as I have explained in the foregoing directions. The position of his violin, however, was not a horizontal one—as can be seen from pictures of Paganini,—but he pressed his upper arm against his body to such an extent that

the peg-box appeared to stand at least three or four inches lower than the level of his shoulder.

In addition to this I had frequent opportunities to visit and hear Ole Bull in 1879, when we were both stopping at Wiesbaden, Germany. It is claimed that Ole Bull's technic in his best period was nothing short of fabulous. He appeared in Mayence in 1878 at the advanced age of 68 years, playing Paganini's Second Concerto, and while much of his former brilliancy and in part much of his purity of intonation was missing, his performance at such an age was truly astonishing. Ole Bull, who is reported as having been on very intimate terms with Paganini, during the latter's entire stay in Paris, also played with the above-described position of the hand and arm. He also pressed his arm against his chest in such fashion as to bring the peg-box of his violin below the level of his shoulder. An additional peculiarity of Ole Bull's position was the fact that the scroll of his violin pointed much more toward the left than is shown in the pictures of Paganini. He claimed that this enabled him to play and breathe more freely. Furthermore, he did not place his four fingers (especially the first and second) upon the fingerboard exactly with the tips, but slightly more with the left edge (*see illustrations VII., IX., XIII., XIV., XV.*) In doing so he reasoned that the nerves at the fingertips were spared to a great extent. Ole Bull

possessed an unusually large left hand, and it must seem plain to every violinist that such a phenomenally gifted virtuoso as he *would have special and important reasons* for adopting Paganini's position, in spite of his large hand and consequent extraordinary stretching powers.

The following instructions are intended to show how to become accustomed to this hand and arm position in the best and quickest manner. With young beginners, who can arrive at technical mastery and certainty much sooner through this position than the customary one, the teacher should advise and help unceasingly until the pupil has gradually accustomed himself to this style of holding the instrument; if in any way possible, a lesson should be given every day until this has been accomplished. Accomplished violinists, however, who are desirous of changing to the new position of the hand and arm *should control their daily practice in front of a large mirror* by taking different positions which enable them to carefully watch the right and left side of their hand, the fingers and their arm. This practice should also be continued while facing the mirror. As a matter of course a Becker Chin and Shoulder Rest is to be used. The player should endeavor to execute double-stops in this position, such as I have written in my "Systematic Studies for Double Stops;" Part I. (*Carl Fischer, New York.*) In addition he should try to hold three and four-

part chords in this position, such as I have written in my Chord-Studies, Parts I. and III., and in my Studies for Double Stops, Part I.; that is, he should endeavor to hold them *for a length of time*, each one about one-quarter to one-half minute, before proceeding to the next one. Of course, the strictest attention must be paid to holding the instrument exactly right and keeping it so.

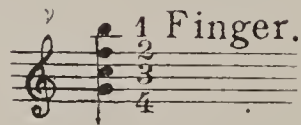
A splendid aid in this direction is to place the fingers on a three or four-part chord and then to raise the fingers separately and let them fall exactly in the same places, for instance:



A very easy and at the same time excellent method of becoming accustomed to this new position is the application of that system of fingering which teaches the simultaneous stopping of "adjacent fifths" with every interval and "keeping the fingers upon the fingerboard as much as possible." To this end the rules and principles laid down in my own method for the violin should be consulted and compared, as well as the exercises and pieces intended for this

special purpose. Furthermore, the exercises by Mazas, Kreutzer, etc., alluded to later on. Kreutzer's Exercises, Nos. 4, 8, 32, 34 in my own revision (Nos. 8, 9, 32, 34 of the original edition) will be found of particular benefit in this direction.

The following very simple proceeding may serve as an excellent test whether or not the player has arrived at a correct position of the hand and elbow. The first finger should be placed upon "B" on the E string in the fourth position; the second upon "F" on the A string, the third upon "C" on the D string, and the fourth upon "G" on the G string.



The player should hold these notes for a short time, and then, without moving the elbow in the slightest manner and keeping it in the exact attitude toward the right, in which it was placed in the fourth position, and with the fingers firmly held upon the fingerboard, he should move down into the first position until the fingers arrive at the following intervals:

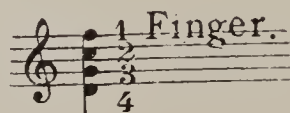
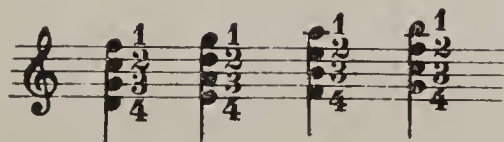




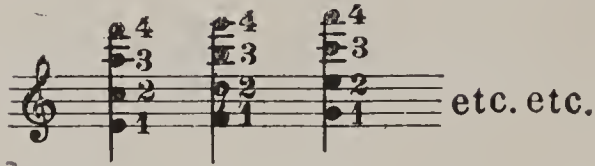
Illustration No. XIV.

Correct position of the hand in the fourth position, as handed down from the classic players. In it the old and new positions are almost identical. In both the neck of the violin rests upon the second joint of the thumb. (The fingers are stopping "C, D, E, F,") The hand proper leans against the rib of the instrument.

If he can do this with ease he will have mastered the new position. At any rate he should make a practice of stopping the following intervals in the four lower positions, as indicated below, as frequently as possible:



and the following groups in the upper ones:



These intervals are also to be varied by stopping them with either sharps or flats; and should be practised, as shown before, by raising and lowering one finger while the others remain firmly in their places.



Illustration No. XV.

Correct position of the hand in the sixth position. In it the old and the new position of the hand are also alike. The tip of the thumb places itself against the rounded portion of the neck. (The fingers are stopping "F, G, A and B flat" on the "G" String). The hand proper is raised still higher above the rib, allowing the thumb to rest upon the edge of the top of the instrument.

Another excellent method for advanced players to become accustomed to this new position

is the practise of exercises written for one special position and studying them in the higher positions (from the fourth position on). As an example I might mention the admirable Caprice in E Major, No. 16, by Rode, which is originally intended especially for the fourth position, as well as the various position exercises in my violin method. Players accustomed to the old positions of the violin will be greatly benefited by studying the fourth position, as in this the position of the hand and elbow is about the same as the new position should be, beginning with the first. A thorough study of the fourth position will therefore aid a player immensely in assuming the new attitude in the first, second and third positions. The reason therefore is quite apparent. Hand and elbow have already become accustomed to being turned to an unusual degree, and in the fourth position the player has become accustomed to having the neck of the instrument rest "upon" the second joint of his thumb. Special mention must be made at this point in reference to the thorough study of the separate positions. This is of the greatest importance, and, taken altogether, they are gone through much too quickly and carelessly.

Special mention should also be made that the lack of strength, pliability of the joints, velocity and stretching powers of the fingers can, in very many cases, be greatly improved by useful and

practical expedients. "This consists in the cultivation of a systematic course of gymnastics for the fingers, arms and hands."* It is a difficult matter to explain why such an important aid for enlarging and developing the technical attainments in the special sphere of violin-playing should have been ignored to such a great extent. Applied with sense and moderation, such a system will aid enormously toward strengthening the fingers, making them pliable and increasing their stretching powers, besides increasing the volubility of the arm and wrist. Furthermore, the bowing, as well as the general perseverance of the player, will be greatly aided. Care must be taken, however, that such gymnastic exercises are never gone through just before practising the instrument itself, as they always tire to a certain extent. Above all, and as already mentioned, such practice should not be "overdone." It need hardly be mentioned that the principal study for insuring advancement must be done with the instrument itself. However, as an excellent aid for technical purposes the above-mentioned gymnastics should not be overlooked.

The thinking teacher, the thinking student,

*For this particular purpose we might recommend "Gymnastics for the fingers and wrist," by E. Warde Jackson, J. P. A complete system of gymnastics based on anatomical principles for developing and strengthening the muscles of the hand; as applied to musical, mechanical and medical purposes with numerous illustrations. Entirely re-written and enlarged by Gustav Saenger. (Carl Fischer, New York, Price, 40c.)

as well as the accomplished, striving artist, must become fully convinced from the above that this new position of the hand and arm—especially in the case of little hands—must be a decided advantage for simplifying the technical difficulties of not only single-note passages in all positions, but also of difficult double-stops as well as entire movements in three and four voiced chords.

The reasons therefor are as follows:

1. As already mentioned, the fingers, especially the two weaker ones, will be enabled to fall upon the fingerboard with greater strength, as the thumb exercises a greater resistant pressure below the neck. In consequence, very beginners will be enabled to produce the intervals of a scale with greater evenness and smoothness. Again, it will not be much more difficult for a beginner to become accustomed to the new position than to the old, as the latter also causes them a great deal of trouble, before becoming entirely accustomed to it.

2. It will be much easier to stretch the fingers beyond the first position and stop intervals belonging to the second and third positions; this holds good for double-stops, and three and four voiced chords, the notes of which frequently extend over two, three and even four positions.

3. The up-and-downward change of positions

can be brought about in a much smoother and more secure manner.

4. Extended jumps, say from the first to the eighth and higher positions, up or down, can be executed with much greater success, without the necessity of removing the thumb from the side of the neck (where it was placed in the old position). In this way the obstruction offered to the hand in the shape of the projection of the neck, where it is joined to the body of the instrument, will be avoided. (Such jumps should be looked for in the exercises of the classic masters as well as in Paganini's Caprices.)

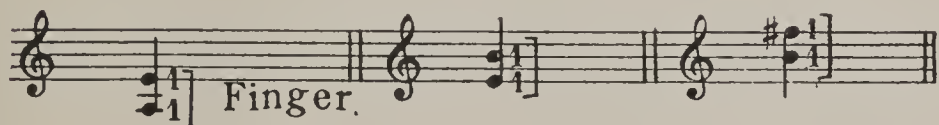
5. The bowing will be very favorably influenced through quiet and secure holding of the instrument, as well as through the position of the hand and arm, as above described.

I will now refer back to the second reason, already mentioned, which can be easily explained in so far that insufficient and faulty preparatory studies are mostly the cause of making the mastery of these caprices very difficult, if not entirely impossible.

My revision of Kreutzer's Forty-two Studies, especially prepared in accordance with the requirements of modern times, appeared in 1886. In these exercises, as well as in the revisions of Mazas' Etudes Melodiques (three books), P. Rode's 12 and Rode's 24 Caprices, Gavinies' 24 Matinees and Paganini's 60 Variations on the song "Barucaba" also in the concluding re-

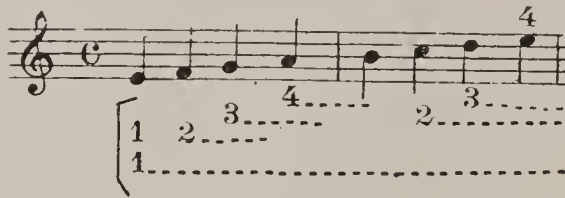
vision of Paganini's 24 Caprices, I have constantly kept in view and aimed at the ideal of every violinist, namely, highest and most finished technical perfection.

In consequence, I have employed the surest and best known principles for quick mastery of pure intonation in single and double-stop passages, of clean, even and smooth change of the positions, of correct velocity, as well as of all the intricacies of bowing. In particular do I wish to call attention to that principle which has been employed throughout and which consists of the "Double-stop in Fifths" and of keeping the fingers upon the fingerboard in systematic fashion. If, in the playing of scales, the first finger is placed upon two neighboring strings, in such fashion that if played simultaneously a perfect fifth is produced, it is designated as a "Double-stop in Fifths" ("Quintdoppelgriff," in German), for instance:



This holds good for the first, second, third, as well as for all the higher positions. Special care must always be taken that the strings are perfectly true as regards fifths. Strings which are not perfectly true in this respect are worthless. In using this principle of "Double-stops

in Fifths," the first finger may be looked upon as an artificial nut, from which the other intervals on the same string may be securely measured and gauged. Attention must be paid that the fingernails are cut sufficiently, so as not to come in contact with the strings. The finger remaining upon the strings supplies each active finger with a so-called supporting-finger, as illustrated herewith:



Allowing the fingers to remain upon the strings in this manner is an admirable pedagogic instructive principle. Through it the feeling of touch is developed to a finer and much quicker degree, the fingers are strengthened more quickly and gain more in dexterity and independence; they become accustomed to exact mathematical measuring upon the fingerboard, and, above all, purity of intonation is arrived at much quicker than when the fingers measure the intervals only instinctively, according to the ear. Also in slurred passages, the player should endeavor to let the first note remain upon the string, and that the second note is already taken the moment the bow crosses the strings. It will be easy to comprehend that double-stop playing will become greatly simplified to all who have been

trained in this style of playing; this stands to reason, as in consequence of the fingers remaining upon the strings, the player is unconsciously playing in double-stops, while to the ear, he produces only single intervals.

Paganini's 24 Caprices embrace the highest possibilities of all double-stop playing. In them we are confronted with rapid double-stop passages in thirds, sixths, octaves, ninths, three and four part arpeggios, trills in octaves, tremolos, etc., extending not only into the highest regions of the A and E string, but also into the highest possible positions of the lower strings. In order to prepare a player systematically for the subsequent mastery of these abnormal difficulties, I would recommend a careful study of my own systematic scale-studies, my systematic chord studies, my systematic studies in double-stops and for the change of positions. My own method and the above-mentioned studies offer a thorough and sure course of arriving at the highest point of technical virtuosity. Additional excellent double-stop studies will be found in my revision of Mazas' Etudes Melodiques. In my revision of Kreutzer's 42 Studies, No. 14 (three-voiced arpeggios), No. 27 (Double octaves), and Nos. 32 to 42 are to be recommended as splendid double-stop studies. Furthermore, in Rode's 12 Etudes Number One, and in Rode's 24 Caprices the Siciliano of No. 4 and then Nos. 16, 19, 20, 23. In Fiorillo's Caprices Nos.

2, 20, 23, 24, 32 and 36 offer excellent material for the study of double-stops.

The 24 so-called *Matinees* by Gavinies, revised by myself, demand strict adherence to my principle of raising the fingers and allowing them to remain on the strings simultaneously, particularly as the nature of these studies, even in simple passages, is principally dependent upon double-stop and chord combinations. Such passages can all be tested "at first as double-stops." These studies of Gavinies are classed as belonging to the most artistic and advanced material of the kind, and many of them are considerably more difficult than the above-mentioned 60 variations by Paganini. Whoever has mastered the latter can boast of being well acquainted with the technical difficulties of Paganini's style, both as regards the left hand and the mastery of the bow.

There can be little doubt that Paganini must be acknowledged as the real inventor of the modern technique of the violin, and Guhr, in his work on Paganini's style of playing, informs us that Paganini's hand was anything but large, but that, in a like manner as great pianists, he had understood how to expand it to such an extent, from his earliest youth on, that large and intricate stretches, such as occur in many of his 24 Caprices and in his concert compositions, were of little account or difficulty to him. This fact alone should carry a certain amount of

weight, and, let us say, consolation for violin-players with small hands. It may be in place right here to remark that slender hands with long, pointed fingers are not always the best for stretching long distances. For the latter purpose broad hands are always best. The best fingers for violin playing are those which are not too short, muscular, but not too thick. These possess the most strength in taking the intervals, the most endurance for double-stops, and are better adapted for the execution of long trills than long thin fingers, which will frequently bend in a most annoying manner, especially in long trills.

Great attention should be paid to the neck of the violin. It will be found that broad and thick necks are better adapted for very large as well as for thin hands with long fingers. Little hands, however (or thick hands, which often have short fingers), can get along better with narrow and slender necks, providing that the fingers are not too fleshy; this latter point must be carefully thought of in selecting a neck, and when considering the spacing of the strings. A splendid means for accustoming the hand to every possible kind of stretch is a certain special treatment, which I have recommended with the 30th Exercise of R. Kreutzer (in my revision) together with Jackson's *Gymnastics for the Hands and Fingers*. This treatment consists of allowing the first finger to remain firmly

upon the string, and of playing its "Third" with the second finger upon the same string, its "Fourth" or "Fifth" with the third, and its "Fifth" or "Sixth" with the fourth finger. For instance:

The image displays two musical exercises, labeled 1 and 2, on a single treble clef staff. Exercise 1 consists of two staves of music. The first staff has three measures: the first measure has a dotted line with '2' above it and '1' below it; the second measure has a dotted line with '2. 3' above it and '(2)' below it; the third measure has a dotted line with '3' above it. The second staff has three measures: the first measure has a dotted line with '3. 4' above it; the second measure has a dotted line with '3' above it and '(4)' below it; the third measure has a dotted line with '3. 4' above it. Exercise 2 also consists of two staves. The first staff has two measures: the first measure has a dotted line with '3' above it and '1' below it; the second measure has a dotted line with '3. 4' above it. The second staff has three measures: the first measure has a dotted line with '4' above it; the second measure has a dotted line with '4' below it; the third measure has a dotted line with '1. 2. 3. 4' above it.

The above to be practised in a like manner on every string, every bar to be repeated many times.

The following exercises are designed for larger hands, also to be practised on every string:

Additional examples of this kind may be found in my own violin method (Part II.)

However, such exercises must be practised daily with deliberate care and at certain intervals, in order that the nerves and muscles of the fingers will not be exerted to too great an extent. Special attention is called at this place to the extraordinary facility with which Paganini used his thumb. It has been stated by eye-witnesses that the tip of his thumb never left the lower thickened extension of the neck, even when playing in the very highest positions, and in consequence never came in contact with the rib of the instrument. There is every possibility of small-

er hands being trained so as to ultimately surmount and master this special difficulty. An excellent preparation will be to place the fingers upon the strings in the highest positions (upon one as well as simultaneously upon all four strings) holding the fingers in these positions firmly and immovably for a length of time, and not allowing the tip of the thumb to leave the thickened projection of the neck. I would advise every violinist to pursue this preparatory exercising very frequently (especially on the G String), as through it he will become accustomed to the new position of the hand much quicker and more easily.

Guhr also maintains in his work that Paganini's marvelous surety and remarkable purity of intonation was arrived at principally through his very complicated studies in harmonics, and illustrates his arguments with a large number of natural artistic single and double-stop harmonics. Guhr's opinion in this regard is worthy of careful consideration. Since Paganini's time, harmonics have been employed to excellent advantage in many of our most effective violin compositions (see those by de Beriot, Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, etc.) However, their clear and effective execution necessitates the most careful and painstaking study, owing to their very complicated mode and manner of production. This may be easily understood when considering that single artistic harmonics neces-

sitate the simultaneous co-operation of two fingers, while with artistic double-stop harmonics, two, three and in some cases all four fingers are required simultaneously. Another difficulty consists in the fact that harmonics will not speak clearly, if the firmly stopped note as well as the lightly-placed finger do not touch the exact spot of the string with mathematical accuracy. The finger must remain upon the string very quietly, as the slightest wavering of the hand can destroy the desired tonal effect. Furthermore, the bow must cross the strings exactly at right angles. Mention must also be made that single and double stop natural harmonics and the single artistic ones will, as a rule, speak clearly with the average thickness of strings.

Most of the artistic double stop harmonics, however, can only be produced satisfactorily with very thin strings. On this account, it is advisable, while studying them, to procure a specially strung violin for this particular purpose. It is well known that a big, full, round tone cannot be produced on a thinly-strung instrument.

The study of harmonics advances a violinist's technical proficiency very considerably, besides lending surety and tenderness to his general interpretation. I will also mention that the study of harmonics may be simplified to a considerable extent by all who will adopt my above-mentioned system of fingering, the fundamental principle of which is never to raise

the fingers unless positively necessary. On the other hand, let me sound a warning to all young violinists not to study the artistic, and particularly not the artistic double-stop harmonics too persistently, as in doing so they will surely neglect more important things, and because, as already mentioned, a large, full tone becomes an impossibility on a thinly-strung instrument. Attention is also called to the combined pizzicati of the left hand and bow (see Caprice 24, Variation 9). This style of pizzicato is very often used to excellent advantage in advanced concert composition. (See 1st Concerto by Ch. de Beriot.)

In addition to the above, mention must be made of a special style of pizzicato for the left hand, as used for the accompaniment of melodies. Paganini's "Duo for one Violin" may serve as an excellent example for this particular effect. Paganini may justly be looked upon as the inventor of both these styles of pizzicati, and I have added the above-mentioned "Duo" to my revision of the Caprices. The study of this style of pizzicato has its additional advantages, in so far as it imparts a great deal of elasticity and flexibility to the left hand. In regard to another innovation of Paganini's, the so-called "Scordatur" (tuning of the violin in a different manner), the reader is referred to Guhr's work on Paganini, already mentioned on some of the preceding pages. The second

Air varie by de Beriot, as well as Paganini's first Concerto, written in E flat major, and for which every one of the four strings is tuned one-half tone higher, may serve as examples for this particular innovation. Furthermore, we are indebted to Paganini for the "extended and exhaustive use he put the G string to," and for which the Caprices number 17 (No. 19 of the original edition) and 18 (No. 18 of the original edition) and the above-mentioned second Air varie by de Beriot may serve as examples. In addition, Variation 41 of the 50 Variations on the E flat major scale by P. Baillot (see my revision); the 15th Caprice by Fiorillo; the 6th and 20th by Rode (see my revision); the Minore from the Adagio of Rode's 7th Concerto (see my revision). These last-named numbers may also be used to splendid advantage as solo compositions. Then I would mention the special exercises in this respect contained in my "Systematic Scale-Studies," Part II., and in the Third Part of my "Systematic Chord Studies." Also several variations of the song "Barucaba," by Paganini (see my revision). Also my arrangement of Schumann's "Evening Song," which with the exception of only a few bars is to be played entirely upon the G string. Paganini played entire concert pieces on the G string, the enormously difficult variations on a theme from Rossini's "Moses" serving as an excellent example thereof. Mention should

also be made at this point that Paganini's Caprices demand the highest possible perfection of the left hand, as well as absolute mastery of the bow. In consequence, a player should endeavor to master all the various styles of spiccato (jumping bow), springing staccato, spring-bow arpeggios and the tremolo in easier exercises (see my method, Part II.) We must not forget to mention the Flautato and the Ponticello, also invented by Paganini. These are peculiar methods of producing a certain kind of harmonics by means of the bow. With the Flautato the fingers are not placed upon the strings as firmly as usual, and the bow is drawn quickly back and forth above the fingerboard (not in the usual place). With the Ponticello, however, the fingers are placed very firmly upon the strings and the bow is drawn "very lightly and quickly" across the strings, "near the bridge."

These harmonics can be produced most successfully in the high positions of the G string, the peculiar style of bowing bringing out the octave of the intervals taken by the left hand (see my Violin School, Part II.) I should like to advise all violinists who have already studied the above-mentioned classic exercises in other editions to select the most important studies from my revisions and practice them a second time, in order to improve their particular shortcomings. "Do not shun the difficulties and troubles of this path; as a reward it will lead

many a player toward Paganini's magic realms in a manner truly surprising; with the highest possible technical perfection as a foundation, he will be enabled to perform the great classic concertos by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Max Bruch, Spohr and many others with much greater success; and in conclusion let me recall a most appropriate saying: "Genius is Patience."



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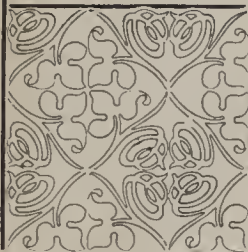
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